Mr. Fearing Comforted

A Sermon
(No. 246)
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at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens.

"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"—Matthew 14:31.

IT SEEMS AS if doubt were doomed to be the perpetual companion of faith. As dust attends the chariotwheels so do doubts naturally becloud faith. Some men of little faith are perpetually enshrouded with fears; their faith seems only strong enough to enable them to doubt. If they had no faith at all, then they would not doubt, but having that little, and but so little, they are perpetually involved in distressing surmises, suspicions, and fears. Others, who have attained to great strength and stability of faith, are nevertheless, at times, subjects of doubt. He who has a colossal faith will sometimes find that the clouds of fear float over the brow of his confidence. It is not possible, I suppose, so long as man is in this world, that he should be perfect in anything; and surely it seems to be quite impossible that he should be perfect in faith. Sometimes, indeed, the Lord purposely leaves his children, withdraws the divine inflowings of his grace, and permits them to begin to sink, in order that they may understand that faith is not their own work, but is at first the gift of God, and must always be maintained and kept alive in the heart by the fresh influence of the Holy Spirit. I take it that Peter was a man of great faith. When others doubted, Peter believed. He boldly avowed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, for which faith he received the Master's commendation, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." He was of faith so strong, that at Christ's command he could tread the billow and find it like glass beneath his feet, yet even he was permitted in this thing to fall. Faith forsook him, he looked at the winds and the waves, and began to sink, and the Lord said to him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" As much as to say, "O Peter, thy great faith is my gift, and the greatness of it is my work. Think not that thou art the author of thine own faith; I will leave thee, and this great faith of thine shall speedily disappear, and like another who hath no faith, thou shalt believe the winds, and regard the waves, but shalt distrust thy Master's power, and therefore shalt thou sink."

I think I shall be quite safe in concluding this morning, that there are some here who are full of doubting and fearing. Sure I am that all true Christians have their times of anxious questioning. The heart that hath never doubted has not yet learned to believe. As the farmers say, "The land that will not grow a thistle, will not grow wheat;" and the heart that cannot produce a doubt has not yet understood the meaning of believing. He that never doubted

of his state—he may, perhaps he may, too late. Yes, there may be timid ones here, those who are always of little faith, and there may be also great hearts, those who are valiant for truth, who are now enduring seasons of despondency and hours of darkness of heart.

Now in endeavoring to comfort you this morning, I would remark that the text goes upon a very wise principle. If a man believes in anything it is always proper to put to him the question, "Why do you believe? What evidence have you that what you believe is certainly correct?" We believe on evidence. Now the most foolish part of many men's doubts, is, that they do not doubt on evidence. If you should put to them the question, "Why do you doubt?"—they would not be able fairly to answer. Yet mark, if men's doubts be painful, the wisest way to remove them is by simply seeing whether they have a firm basis. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" If you believe a thing you want evidence, and before you doubt a thing you ought to have evidence too. To believe without evidence is to be credulous, and to doubt without evidence is to be foolish. We should have ground for our doubts as well as a basis for our faith. The text, therefore, goes on a most excellent principle, and it deals with all doubting minds by asking them this question, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

I shall endeavor to exhort you on the same plan this morning. I shall divide only sermon into two parts. First, I shall address myself to those of you who are in great trouble with regard to *temporal circumstances,* you are God's people, but you are sorely tried, and you have begun to doubt. I shall then deal with you upon *spiritual matters*—there are some here who are God's true, quickened, and living people, but they are doubting—to them also I shall put the same question, "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?"

I. First, then, in TEMPORAL CIRCUMSTANCES, God has not made for his people a smooth path to heaven. Before they are crowned they must fight; before they can enter the celestial city they must fulfill a weary pilgrimage. Religion helps us in trouble, but it does not suffer us to escape from it. It is through much tribulation that we inherit the kingdom. Now the Christian when he is full of faith passes through affliction with a song in his mouth; he would enter the fiery furnace itself, fearless of the devouring flame, or with Jonah he would descend into the great deeps, unalarmed at the hungry sea. As long as faith maintains its hold, fear is a stranger; but at times, during sundry great and sore troubles, the Christian begins to fear that surely at last he shall be overcome, and shall be left to himself to die and perish in despair.

Now, what is the reason why you doubt? I must come to the plan of the text and put the great question, "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" Here it will be proper for us to enquire: Why did Simon Peter doubt? He doubted for two reasons. First, because he looked too much to second causes and secondly, because be looked too little at the first cause. The answer will suit you also, my trembling brother. This is the reason why you doubt, because you are looking too much to the things that are seen, and too little to your

unseen Friend who is behind your troubles and who shall come forth for your deliverance. See poor Peter in the ship—his Master bids him come; in a moment he casts himself into the sea, and to his own surprise he finds himself walking the billows. He looks down, and actually it is the fact; his foot is upon a crested wave, and yet he stands erect; he treads again, and yet his footing is secure. "Oh!" thinks Peter, "this is marvellous." He begins to wonder within his spirit what manner of man *he* must be who has enabled him thus to tread the treacherous deep; but just then, there comes howling across the sea a terrible blast of wind; it whistles in the ear of Peter, and he says within himself, "Ah! here comes an enormous billow driven forward by the blast now, surely, I must, I shall be overwhelmed." No sooner does the thought enter his heart than down he goes; and the waves begin to enclose him. So long as he shut his eye to the billow, and to the blast, and kept it only open to theLord who stood there before him, he did not sink; but the moment he shut his eye on Christ, and looked at the stormy wind and treacherous deep, down he went. He might have traversed the leagues of the Atlantic, he might have crossed the broad Pacific, if he could but have kept his eye on Christ, and ne'er a billow would have yielded to his tread, but he might have been drowned in a very brook if he began to look at second causes, and to forget the Great Head and Master of the Universe who had bidden him walk the sea. I say, the very reason of Peter's doubt was, that he looked at second causes and not at the first cause. Now, that is the reason why you doubt. Let me just probe you now for a while. You are in despondency about temporal affairs: what is the reason why you are in trouble? "Because," say you, "I never was in such a condition before in my life. Wave upon wave of trouble comes upon me. I have lost one friend and then another. It seems as if business had altogether run away from me. Once I had a flood-tide, and now it is an ebb, and my poor ship grates upon the gravel, and I find she has not water enough to float her—what will become of me? And, oh! sir, my enemies have conspired against me in every way to cut me up and destroy me; opposition upon opposition threatens me. My shop must be closed; bankruptcy stares me in the face, and I know not what is to become of me." Or else your troubles take another shape, and you feel that you are called to some eminently arduous service for your Lord, and your strength is utterly insignificant compared with the labor before you. If you had great faith it would be as much as you could do to accomplish it; but with your poor little faith you are completely beaten. You cannot see how you can accomplish the matter at all. Now, what is all this but simply looking at second causes? You are looking at your trouble, not at the God who sent your trouble; you are looking at yourselves, not at the God who dwells within you, and who has promised to sustain you. O soul! it were enough to make the mightiest heart doubt, if it should look only at things that are seen. He that is nearest to the kingdom of heaven would have cause to droop and die if he had nothing to look at but that which eye can see and ear can ear. What wonder then if thou art disconsolate, when thou hast begun to look at the things which always must be enemies to faith?

But I would remind you that you have forgotten to look to Christ since you have been in this trouble. Let me ask you, have you not thought less of Christ than you ever did? I will not suppose that you have neglected prayer, or have left your Bible unread; but still, have you had any of those sweet thoughts of Christ which once you had? Have you been able to take all your troubles to him and say—"Lord, thou knowest all things; I trust all in thy hands?" Let me ask you, have you considered that Christ is omnipotent, and therefore able to deliver you; that he is faithful, and must deliver you, because he has promised to do so? Have you not kept your eye on his rod, and not on his hand? Have you not looked rather to the crook that smote you, than to the heart that moved that crook? Oh, recollect, that you can never find joy and peace while you are looking at the things that are seen, the secood causes of your trouble; your only hope, your only refuge and joy must be to look to him who dwells within the veil. Peter sunk when he looked to outward providences, so must you. He would never have ceased to walk the wave, never would he have begun to sink, if he had looked alone to Christ, nor will you if you will look alone to him.

And here let me now begin to argue with such of you as are the people of God, who are in sore trouble lest Christ should leave you to sink. Let me forbid your fears by a few words of consolation. You are now in Peter's condition; you are like Peter; *you are Christ's servant.* Christ is a good master. You have never heard that he suffered one of his servants to be drowned when going on his errands. Will he not take care of his own? Shall it be said at last that one of Christ's disciples perished while he was in obedience to Christ. I say he were a bad master if he should send you on an errand that would involve your destruction. Peter, when he was in the water, was where his master had called him to be, and vou in your trouble now, are not only Christ's servant, but you are where Christ has chosen to put you. Your afflictions, remember, come neither from the east nor from the west, neither doth your trouble grow out of the ground. All your suffering is sent upon you by your God. The medicine which you now drink is compounded in heaven. Every grain of this bitterness which now fills your mouth was measured by the heavenly physician. There is not an ounce more trouble in your cup, than God chose to put there. Your burden was weighed by God before you were called to bear it. The Lord who gave you the mercy has taken it away; the same God who has blessed you with joy is he that hath now ploughed you with grief. You are where God put you. Ask yourself this question then:—Can it be possible that Christ would put his own servant into a perilous condition and then leave him there? I have heard of fiends, in fables, tempting men into the sea to drown them; but is Christ a syren? Will he entice his people on to the rocks? Will he tempt them into a place where he shall destroy them? God forbid. If Christ calls thee into the fire, he will bring thee out of it; and if he bids thee walk the sea, he will enable thee to tread it in safety. Doubt not, soul; if thou hadst come there of thyself, then thou mightest fear, but since Christ put thee there, he will bring thee out again. Let this be the pillar of thy confidence—thou art his servant, he wilt not leave

thee; thou art where he put thee, he cannot suffer thee to perish. Look away, then, from the trouble that surrounds thee, to thy Master, and to his hand that hath planned all these things.

Remember too, who it is that hath thee where thou art. It is no harsh tyrant who has led thee into trouble. It is no austere unloving heart who hath bidden thee pass through this difficulty to gratify a capricious whim. Ah, no, he who troubles thee is *Christ.* Remember his bleeding hand; and canst thou think that the hand which dropped with gore can ever hang down when it should be stretched for thy deliverance? Think of the eye that wept over thee on the cross; and can the eye that wept for thee be blind when thou art in grief? Think of the heart that was opened for thee; and shall the heart that did bleed its life away to rescue thee from death, be hard and stolid when thou art overwhelmed in sorrow? It is Christ, that stands on yonder billow in the midst of the tempest with thee. He is suffering as well as thou art. Peter is not the only one walking on the sea; his master is there with him too. And so is Jesus with thee to-day, with thee in thy troubles, suffering *with* thee as he suffered *for* thee. Shall he leave thee, he that bought thee, he who is married to thee, he that hath led thee thus far, hath succoured thee hitherto he who loves thee better than he loves himself, shall he forsake thee? O turn thine eyes from the rough billow, listen no longer to the howling tempest, turn thine eyes to him thy loving Lord, thy faithful friend, and fix thy trust on him, who even now in the midst of the tempest, cries, "It is I, be not afraid."

One other reflection will I offer to such of you as are now in sore trouble on account of temporal matters, and it is this—*Christ has helped you hitherto.* Should not this console you? Ah, Peter, why couldest thou fear that thou shouldest sink? It was miracle enough that thou didst not sink at first. What power is it that hath held thee up till now? Certainly not thine own. Thou hadst fallen at once to the bottom of the sea, O man, if God had not been thy helper; if Jesus had not made thee buoyant, Peter, thou wouldest soon have been a floating carcase. He who helped thee then to walk so long as thou couldest walk, surely he is able to help thee all the way until he shall grasp thy hand in Paradise to glorify thee with himself. Let any Christian look back to his past life, and he will be astonished that he is what he is and where he is. The whole Christian life is a series of miracles, wonders linked into wonders, in one perpetual chain. Marvel, believer, that thou hast been upheld till now; and cannot he that hath kept thee to this day preserve thee to the end? What is yon roaring wave that threatens to overwhelm thee—what is it? why thou hast endured greater waves than these in the past. What is yon howling blast? Why, he has saved thee when the wind was howling worse than that. He that helped thee in six troubles will not forsake thee in this. He who hath delivered thee out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, he will not, he cannot forsake thee now.

In all this, I have labored to turn your eyes from what you are seeing to that which you cannot see, but in which you must believe. Oh! if I might but be successful, though feeble my words, yet mighty should be the consolation which should flow therefrom.

A minister of Christ, who was always in the habit of visiting those whom he knew to be eminent for piety, in order that he might learn from them, called upon an aged Christian who had been distinguished for his holiness. To his great surprise, however, when he sat down by his bedside, the erred man said, "Ah! I have lost my way. I did think at one time that I was a child of God, now I find that I have been a stumbling-block to others; for these forty years I have deceived the church and deceived myself, and now I discover that I am a lost soul." The minister very wisely said to him, "Ah! then I suppose you like the song of the drunkard and you are very fond of the amusements of the world and delight in profanity and sin?" "Ah! no," said he, "I cannot bear them, I could not endure to sin against God." "O then," said the minister, "then it is not at all likely that God will lock you up in hell with men that you cannot bear here. If now you hate sin, depend on it God will not shut you up for ever with sinners. But, my brother," said the minister "tell me what has brought you into such a distressed state of mind?" "O sir, "said he, "it was looking away from the God of providence, to myself I had managed to save about one hundred pounds, and I have been lying here ill now this last six months, and I was thinking that my one hundred pounds would soon be spent, and then what should I do. I think I shall have to go to the workhouse, I have no friend to take care of me, and I have been thinking about that one hundred pounds of mine. I knew it would soon be gone, and then, then, how could the Lord provide for me. I never had either doubt or fear till I began to think about temporal matters. The time was when I could leave all that with God. If I had not had one hundred pounds, I should have felt quite sure he would provide for me; but I begin to think now that I cannot provide for myself. The moment I think of that, my heart is darkened." The minister then led him away from all trust in an arm of flesh, and told him his dependence for bread and water was not on his one hundred pounds, but on the God who is the possessor of heaven and earth—that as for his bread being given him and his water being sure God would take care of that, for in so doing he would only be fulfilling his promise. The poor man was enabled in the matter of providence to cast himself entirely upon God, and then his doubts and fears subsided, and once more he began to walk the sea of trouble, and did not sink. O believer, if thou takest thy business into thine own hands, thou wilt soon be in trouble. The old Puritan said, "He that carves for himself will soon cut his fingers," and I believe it. There never was a man who began to take his own matters out of God's hand that was not glad enough to take them back again. He that runs before the cloud runs a fool's errand. If we leave all our matters, temporal as well as spiritual, in the hand of God, we shall lack no good thing, and what is better still, we shall have no care, no trouble, no thought; we shall cast all our burden upon him for he careth for us. There is no need for two to care, for God to care and the creature too. If the Creator cares for us, then the creature may sing all day long with joy and gladness:—

"Mortals cease from toil and sorrow,

God provideth for the morrow."

II. But now, in the second part of the discourse, I have to speak of SPIRITIUAL THINGS. To the Christian, these are the causes of more trouble than all his temporal trials. In the matters of the soul and of eternity many doubts will arise. I shall, however, divide them into two sorts—doubts of our present acceptance, and doubts of our final perseverance.

Many there are of God's people who are much vexed and troubled with doubts about their present acceptance. "Oh," say they "there was a time when I knew I was a child of God; I was sure that I was Christ's, my heart would fly up to heaven at a word; I looked to Christ hanging on the cross, I fixed all my trust on him, and a sweet, calm, and blessed repose filled my spirit.

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed;
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void,
The world can never fill.'

And now," saith this doubting one, "now I am afraid I never knew the Lord; I think that I have deceived myself, and that I have been a hypocrite. Oh that I could but know that I am Christ's, I would give all I had in the world, if he would but let me know that he is my beloved, and that I am his." Now, soul, I will deal with thee as I have been just now treating of Peter. Thy doubts arise from looking to second causes, and not to Christ. Let us see if this is not the truth. Why do you doubt? Your answer is, "I doubt, because I feel my sin so much. Oh, what sins have I committed! When first I came to Christ I *thought* I was the chief of sinners; but now I *know* I am. Day after day I have added to my guilt; and since my pretended conversion," says this doubting one, "I have been a bigger sinner than ever I was before. I have sinned against light and against knowledge, against grace, and mercy, and favor. O never was there such a sinner under God's heaven out of hell as I am." But, soul, is not this looking to second causes? It is true, thou art the chief of sinners; take that for granted, let us not dispute it. Thy sins are as evil as thou sayest they are, and a great deal more so. Depend on it, thou art worse than thou thinkest thyself to be. Thou thinkest thou art bad enough, but thou art not so bad in thine own estimation as thou really art. Thy sins seem to thee to be like roaring billows, but in God's sight they are like towering mountains without summit. Thou seemest to thyself to be black—black as the tents of Kedar; in God's eyes thou art blacker still. Set that down, to begin with, that the waves are big, and that the winds are howling, I will not dispute that. I ask thee, what hast thou to do with that? Does not the Word of God command thee to look to Christ. Great as thy sins are, Christ is greater than they all. They are black; but his blood can wash thee whiter than snow. I know thy sins deserve damnation; but Christ's merits deserve salvation. It is true, the pit of hell is thy lawful portion, but heaven itself is thy gracious portion. What! is Christ less powerful than thy sin? That cannot be! To suppose *that* were that to make the creature mightier than the Creator. What!

is thy guilt more prevalent with God than Christ's righteousness? Canst thou think so little of Christ as to imagine that thy sins can overwhelm and conquer him? O man, thy sins are like mountains; but Christ's love is like Noah's flood; it prevaileth twenty cubits, and the tops of the mountains are covered. It Is looking at sin and not looking to the Saviour that has made thee doubt. Thou art looking to the second cause, and not to him who is greater than all.

"Nay, but," you reply, "it is not my sin, sir, that grieves me; it is this: I feel so hardened, I do not feel my sin as I ought. Oh if I could but weep as some weep! If I could but pray as some pray! Then I think I could be saved. If I could feel some of the terrors that good men have felt, then I think I could believe. But I feel none of these things. My heart seems like a rock of ice, hard as granite, and as cold as an iceberg. It will not melt. You may preach, but it is not affected; I may pray, but my heart seems dumb, I may read even the story of Christ's death, and yet my soul is not moved by it. Oh surely I cannot be saved!" Ah this is *looking to second causes,* again! Hast thou forgotten that Word which saith, "God is greater than our hearts?" Hast thou forgotten that? O child of God! shame on thee that thou dost look for comfort where comfort never can be found. Look to thyself for peace! Why, there ne'er can be any in this land of war. Look to thine own heart for joy! There can be none there, in this barren wilderness of sin. Turn, turn thine eye to Christ: he can cleanse thine heart, he can create life, and light, and truth in the inward parts; he can wash thee till thou shalt be whiter than snow, and cleanse thy soul and quicken it, and make it live, and feel, and move, so that it shall hear his simplest words, and obey his whispered mandate. O look not now at the second cause; look thou at the great first cause; otherwise I shall put to thee again the question, "O thou of little faith, *wherefore* didst thou doubts"

"Still," says another, "I could believe, notwithstanding my sin and my hardness of heart; but, do you know, that of late I have lost communion with Christ to such an extent that I cannot help thinking that I must be a cast-away. Oh! sir, there were times when Christ used to visit me, and bring me such sweet love-tokens. I was like the little ewe lamb in the parable; I did drink out of his cup, and feed from his table, and lie in his bosom; often did he take me to his banqueting-house, his banner over me was love. What feastings I then had! I would bask in the sunlight of his countenance. It was summer with my soul. But now it is winter, and the sun is gone, and the banqueting-house is closed. No fruits are on the table; no wines are in the bottles of the promise; I come to the sanctuary, but I find no comfort; I turn to the Bible, but I find no solace; I fall on my knees, but even the stream of prayer seems to be a dry brook. Ah! soul, but art thou not still looking to second causes? These are the most precious of all secondary things, but yet thou must not look to them, but to Christ. Remember, it is not thy communing that saves thee, but Christ's dying; it is not Christ's comfortable visit to thy soul, that ensures thy salvation; it is Christ's own visit to the house of mourning, and to the garden of Gethsemane. I would have thee keep thy comforts as long

as thou canst; but when they die, believe on thy God still. Jonah had a gourd once, and when that gourd died he began to mourn. Well might some one have said to him, "Jonah! thou hast lost thy gourd, but thou hast not lost thy God." And so might we say to you: you have not lost his love; you have lost the light of his countenance, but you have not lost the love of his heart; you have lost his sweet and gracious communion, but he is the same still, and he would have thee believe his faithfulness and trust him in the dark and rely upon him in the stormy wind and tempest. Look to none of these outward things, but look alone to Christ—Christ bleeding, Christ dying Christ dead, Christ buried, Christ risen, Christ ascended, Christ interceding. This is the thing thou art to look to—Christ, and him only. And looking there, thou shalt be comforted. But look to aught else, and thou shalt begin to sink; like Peter, the waves shall fail thee, and thou shalt have to cry, "Lord, save me, or I perish."

But, again, to conclude: others of God's people are afraid that they shall never be able to persevere and hold out to the end. "Oh!" says one, "I know I shall yet fall away and perish, for look!—look what an evil heart of unbelief I have; I cannot live one day without sin; my heart is so treacherous, it is like a bomb-shell; let but a spark of temptation fall upon it and it will blow up to my eternal destruction. With such a tinder-box heart as I have, how can I hope to escape, while I walk in the midst of a shower of sparks." "Oh!" saith one, "I feel my nature to be so utterly vile and depraved that I cannot hope to persevere. If I hold on a week or a month it will be a great work; but to hold on all my life until I die—oh! this is impossible." Looking to second causes again, are you not? Will you please to remember that if you look to creature strength it is utterly impossible that you should persevere in grace, even for ten minutes, much less for ten years! If your perseverance depends upon yourself you are a lost man. You may write that down for a certainty. If you have one jot or one tittle to do with your own perseverance in divine grace you will never see God's face at last; your grace will die out; your life will be extinguished, and you must perish, if your salvation depends upon yourself. But remember, you have already been kept these months and these years: what has done that? Why, divine grace; and the divine grace that has held you on for one year can hold you on for a century, nay, for an eternity, if it were necessary. He that has begun can carry on and must carry on too, otherwise he were false to his promise and would deny himself. "Ah! but," you say, "sir, I cannot tell with what temptations I am surrounded; I am in a workshop, where everybody laughs at me; I am called nicknames because I follow the cause of Christ. I have been able hitherto to put up with their rebukes and their jests; but now they are adopting another plan; they try to tempt me away from the house of God, and entice me to the theater, and to worldly amusements, and I feel that, placed as I am, I never can hold on. As well might a spark hope to live in the midst of an ocean as for grace to live in my heart." Ah! but, soul, who has made it to live hitherto? What is it that hath helped thee up till now to say, "Nay," to every temptation? Why, the Lord thy Redeemer. Thou couldst not have done it so long, if it had not been for him; and he that hath helped

thee to stand so long will never put thee to shame. Why, if thou be a child of God, and thou shouldst fall away and perish, what dishonor would be brought on Christ! "Aha!" the devil would say, "here is a child of God, and God has turned him out of his family, and I have got him in hell at last. Is this what God doth with his children—loves them one day, and hates them the next—tells them he forgives them, and yet punishes them—accepts them in Christ, and yet sends them into hell?" Can that be? Shall it be? Never: not while God is God. "Aha!" again, says Satan, "believers have eternal life given to them. Here is one that had eternal life, and this eternal life has died out. It was not eternal. The promise was a lie. It was temporary life; it was not eternal life. Aha!" says he, "I have found a flaw in Christ's promise; he gave them only temporary life, and called it eternal." And again, the arch-fiend would say, if it were possible for one child of God to perish: "Aha! I have one of the jewels of Christ's crown here;" and he would hold it up, and defy Christ to his very face, and laugh him to scorn. "This is a jewel that thou didst purchase with thine own blood. Here is one that thou didst come into the world to save and yet thou couldst not save him. Thou didst buy him, and pay for him, and yet I have got him, he was a jewel of thy crown, and yet here he is, in the hand of the black prince, thine enemy. Aha! king with a damaged crown! thou hast lost one of thy jewels." Can it be so? No, never, and therefore every one that believeth is as sure of heaven as if he were there. If thou casteth thyself simply on Christ, nor death, nor hell, shall ever destroy thee. Remember what good old Mr. Berridge said, when he was met by a friend one morning, "How do you do, Mr. Berridge?" "Pretty well, I thank you," said he, "and as sure of heaven as if I were there; for I have a solid confidence in Christ." What a happy man such a man must be, who knows and feels that to be true! And yet, if you do not feel it, if you are the children of God, I put to you this question, "Wherefore dost thou doubt?" Is there not good reason to believe. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" If thou hast believed in Christ, saved thou art, and saved thou shalt be, if thou hast committed thyself to his hands: "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him."

"Yes." says one. "this is not the fear that troubles me; my only doubt is whether I am a child of God or not." I finish, therefore, by going over the old ground. Soul, if thou wouldst know whether thou art a child of God, look not to thyself, but look to Christ. Ye who are here to-day, who desire to be saved, but yet fear you never can be, never look to yourselves for any ground of acceptance before God. Not self, but Jesus; not heart, but Christ; not man, but man's Creator. O sinner! think not that thou art to bring anything to Christ to recommend thee. Come to him just as thou art. Me wants no good works of thine—no good feelings either. Come, just as thou art. All that thou canst want to fit thee for heaven, he has bought for thee, and he will give thee; all these freely thou shalt have for the asking. Only come, and he will not cast thee away. But do you say, "Oh, I cannot believe that Christ is able to save

such a sinner as I am. "I reply, "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" He has already saved sinners as great as thou art; only try him, only try him.

"Venture on him, venture wholly;

Let no other trust intrude."

Try him, try him; and if you find him false, then tell it everywhere that Christ was untrue. But that shall never be. Go to him; tell him you are a wretched undone soul, without his sovereign grace; ask him to have mercy on you. Tell him you are determined, it you do perish, that you will perish at the foot of his cross. Go and cling to him, as he hangs bleeding there; look him in the face, and say, "Jesus, I have no other refuge; if thou spurn me, I am lost; but I will never go from thee; I will clasp thee in life, and clasp thee in death, as the only rock of my soul's salvation "Depend upon it, you shall not be sent empty away; you must, you shall be accepted, if you will simply believe. Oh, may God enable you, by the divine influence of his Holy Spirit, to believe; and then, shall we not have to put the question, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" I pray God now apply these words to your comfort. They have been very simple, and very homely words; but nevertheless, they will suit simple, homely hearts. If God shall bless them, to him be the glory!